

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3322
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TAGS:ETRD, PL, UR
SUBJECT:SOVIET-POLISH TRADE IN FIRST QUARTER OF 1978

REF: (A) WARSAW 5111, (B) MOSCOW 7892

1. RECENTLY PUBLISHED STATISTICS ON SOVIET FOREIGN
TRADE IN FIRST QUARTER OF 1978 (BEING REPORTED SEPTTEL)
DO NOT SHOW AS LARGE A POLISH TRADE DEFICIT WITH USSR AS
THOSE REPORTED PARA 19 REFTTEL A. SOVIET STATISTICS
SHOW SOVIET EXPORTS TO POLAND OF R743.5 MILLION AND
SOVIET IMPORTS FROM POLAND OF R770.2 MILLION. THIS
REPRESENTS DECREASE IN EXPORTS OF 7.3 PERCENT AND
INCREASE IN IMPORTS OF 15.8 PERCENT FROM SAME PERIOD
LAST YEAR. TURNAROUND IN BALANCE IS, HOWEVER,
SIGNIFICANT, SINCE LAST YEAR POLAND HAD R136.2 MILLION
DEFICIT, COMPARED AS R26.7 MILLION SURPLUS IN FIRST
QUARTER OF THIS YEAR.

2. COMMENT: IT MAY BE THAT SOVIET STATISTICS DO NOT YET
REFLECT SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF POLISH EXPORTS, ESPECIALLY
IF THESE OCCURRED IN MARCH. WE DO RECALL, HOWEVER,
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THAT IN FIRST QUARTER OF 1977 THERE HAD BEEN SIGNIFICANT
SURGE IN SOVIET SURPLUS WITH SEVERAL CEMA COUNTRIES,
INCLUDING POLAND (REFTTEL B). SOVIET-POLISH TRADE IN
LAST HALF OF 1977 ALSO SHOWED MORE NEARLY BALANCED
TRADE, WITH SOVIETS RUNNING SURPLUS OF "ONLY" 51.9
MILLION RUBLES. THUS, FIRST QUARTER 1978 MAY REPRESENT
CONTINUATION OF TREND TOWARD MORE BALANCED TRADE WHICH

BEGAN, ACCORDING TO SOVIET STATISTICS, IN SECOND HALF OF
1977. MATLOCK

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